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ABSTRACT

The Netherlands has an effective training system for secondary school administrators, in spite of an outwardly complex and compartmentalized education system. Nearly one-third of the schools are Roman Catholic, one-third Protestant, and one-third run by municipalities and by private boards. There is increasing emphasis on the growing complexity of the headmaster's task. Most headmasters engage in organizational planning within their school, and many have powers of staff selection delegated to them. Selection procedures of headmasters reflect a high degree of participation by employers, parents, and, in some cases, pupils. The task of headmaster training is delegated to a regional teacher training center, Gelderse Leergangen, and lasts for 13 days with two subsequent followup sessions. The basic emphasis of the courses is the "school as an organization in a state of change." The school is studied as a social system. Trainers believe that teaching headmasters to solve school problems is of prime importance. The aim is to provide headmasters with the opportunity to describe and diagnose their own situations and to work out solutions to problems in their own schools. Some group sessions give participants practical training in social, group, and meeting skills. In other groups, individual problem solving methods and policy making skills are studied. Interviews of graduates provided favorable ratings of the program, but some criticisms of the scope of the endeavor were voiced. (JD)

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SELECTION AND TRAINING OF SECONDARY SCHOOL HEADTEACHERS IN THE NETHERLANDS

This report provides an introduction to the current in-service training programme for heads and deputies of secondary schools in the Netherlands.

It is based on a short 3-week visit.

I have also included some comments on headteacher selection procedure.

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Report by D G ESP following his study visit to Europe between January and June 1980.

SP 018 740

INTRODUCTION

The Netherlands, traditional meeting place of Calvinist, Roman Catholic and Humanist traditions, has a school system based on the principle of freedom of provision of education as a result of the school struggle of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The private schools are subsidised up to 100 per cent by the state and the aim is to accord equal status to all schools and opportunities for education based on the rights of religious and ideoligical groups. Roughly one-third of all schools are Roman Catholic, one-third Protestant and one-third non-denominational - ie run by the municipalities and by private boards (except for 55 state secondary schools). The municipalities received specific grants from central government and act as agents of central government. Their role is therefore not similar to that of local education authorities for primary and secondary education in England and Wales. Since the 'Mammoth' Act (agreed by parliament 1963 and enacted 1968), the Ministry of Education has endeavoured to exercise a stronger influence on the curriculum in its attempts to raise the general level of education and cope with the needs of minority groups.

Compulsory education starts at age 6, but over 95 per cent of children enter kindergarten at 4. Elementary education is given to the age range 6-12 years. This is followed by secondary education, consisting of 4, 5 or 6 years dependent on attendance at a vocational training school (4 years), a secondary of middle level (MAVO) (4 years) or higher level (HAVO) (5 years) or an 'Atheneum' or 'gymnasium' (6 years) (VWO). Many schools combine MAVO/HAVO or HAVO/VWO, and others encompass all three levels of general education. There are a number of experimental comprehensive schools (middenscholen) (12-16 age range) and current discussions are aimed at a closer link in work between vocational and general education in the first two years of secondary education. There is a wide variation in size of schools (eg MAVOs range from 150 to 800 pupils). As in all countries, it is difficult to keep up with levels and trends; for example the discussion of the 'Boven' school - or comprehensive 16+ school - is currently in abeyance.

Visits to schools revealed a greater diversity than expected. The 'columnar' structure of Dutch society was also not so apparent in the reality of school and school life, a Catholic VWO/HAVO/MAVO with a 'progressive' head having much in common with a similar Protestant, municipal or state school.

It is encouraging to see a country with an outwardly complex and compartmentalized education system organising a national training course for secondary school heads and deputies whatever their 'ideology'.

THE HEAD'S TASK IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE NETHERLANDS

In common with a general trend in Europe there is increasing emphasis on the growing complexity of the head's task. The schools I visited gave me an opportunity to hear from heads and their deputies, the growing problems presented by employment legislation, and demands for participation by parents. Although general staffing entitlements are laid down most heads were engaged in organisational planning within their school and many of them had powers of staff selection effectively delegated to them. Recent debates on the role of school boards in Holland have emphasised the importance of these boards in deciding general policy. The debate has also confirmed the need for the board to delegate the execution of general policy and the management of the school entirely to the head. The wider debate on the 'relatively autonomous school' has also underlined the key role of the head as a pedagogic leader and manager. Indeed my impression was that the Dutch head has a great deal of freedom to manage, provided that he realises his degree of autonomy. The Arnhem course has certainly encouraged heads to improve and extend their management and leadership role.

SELECTION OF SECONDARY SCHOOL HEADS (RECTORS) AND DEPUTIES (CON-RECTORS) IN THE NETHERLANDS

Selection procedures in the Netherlands reflect a high degree of participation by employers and parents, and in isolated cases - pupils. They raise questions about the proper role of the professional and the layman. Certainly teachers and parents (and perhaps pupils?) in a school can contribute greatly to an understanding of the leadership tasks that will face a new head at a particular stage in the school's development.

There is a wide variety of practice. In all of the schools I visited considerable thought had been given to the role of parents, teachers, pupils, politicians and administrators. Some procedures were highly participative. The greater the degree of participation, however, the lengthier the selection process.

The following examples illustrate the range of practice. Example (D) is an experimental scheme in the Haarlem Municipality. The other examples describe a range of procedures in more common usage.

(A) Procedure for the 55 State Secondary Schools

Selection and Appointment of Rector

(a) The post is advertised nationally by the Ministry of Education and Science;

(b) Applications come to the HMI in the district;

(c) He has discussions with his senior colleagues, the existing head and the teaching staff;

(d) Details are sent in to the Secondary Schools Directorate at the Ministry who interview 5 or 6 and do the selection;

(e) The final decision can go against the inspector's advice. The involvement of school staff helps to ensure that a head 'fits into the school'.

(B) A Municipality in Noord-Holland

Personnel profiles and job descriptions are used for appointment of heads and other senior teaching staff.

Selection of Heads (Rectors) and Deputy Heads (Con-Rectors)

1. The inspectors in this authority were against the idea of a detailed job description for the head. Flexibility was needed and 'personality counts'. Experience as a sub-rector is sought and candidates are preferred in the 35-50 age range.

2. It is most important that the candidate is acceptable to the teachers in the school.

3. Teacher qualification is no bar - a 1st, 2nd or 3rd grade qualification will be acceptable in a school containing VWO/HAVO and MAVO courses.

Selection procedures

(a) National advertisement;

(b) Small selection committee of chief personnel officer, Wethouder (Alderman and Chairman of Education Committee), local inspector - this group shortlist or re-advertise;

(c) 6-8 are shortlisted and references taken up;

(d) A second selection committee then meets (now including existing head of the school), reduces to 3-4 for interview;

(e) The selection committee interview the candidates;

(f) The participation committee then join the procedure. This committee includes representatives of the municipal school board (past and present), parent and teachers' association representatives from the school (2 representatives for each category) and in addition there is 1 teacher representative from municipal level (usually a rector) and a parent representative (municipal level);

(g) The participation committee can give a profile of what they want. They are given applicants' letters and a briefing on references (not the references). This committee advise the 'wethouder' but often forget that they are advisory and not executive;

(h) A final list goes to the city council (in recent years only one name has gone forward) after the school board of the council have given their advice. The school board also interview shortlisted candidates - this procedure takes 7-8 months.

(The local inspector in this municipality is a member of a private school board who delegate appointment of head to 2 or 3 of their own number. The talk is completed in 3-4 months.)

(C) A Municipal VWO/HAVO/MAVO - 1,250 pupils in Noord-Holland

School leader team of Rector plus 5 con-rectors.

Selection of Con-Rectors

(a) Usually internal appointment based on teacher concensus;

(b) Teachers are asked if they are interested in the vacancy;

(c) An advisory committee of 6 teachers and 2 non-teaching staff representatives chosen by the staff make recommendations to the municipal board. They can adopt their own procedures;

(d) In this case it was apparent that the real power lay with the rector and not the municipal board who "leave it to the professionals". If the rector disagrees with the 'Advisory Committee's' recommendations, he then talks the problem over with that committee - obviously much negotiation goes on.

Selection of Rector

(a) The influence of parents and teachers' associations is formalised;

(b) The job is advertised nationally;

(c) The teaching and non-teaching staff see applications at all stages;

(d) References are taken up either before or after interview;

(e) Shortlisting is done by the Wethouder, plus the school leader team (rector and con-rectors) at the school concerned;

(f) Interview of shortlisted candidates by inspector of local education authority, Wethouder and/or chief officer, school board plus 1 teacher representative and 1 parent representative. A choice of first and second is then put to:-

(g) The Municipal Council - a formality unless they turn down a recommendation because of a 'political problem'.

(D) A Municipality - Experimental Scheme (Haarlem)

This procedure applies in all the municipal secondary schools in Haarlem.

Appointment of Rector

Stage 1: Personnel profiles - a description of the type of person needed and a job description are prepared separately by three groups:

(a) the teaching and non-teaching staff in the school;

(b) parents:

(c) pupils.

The school board prepares from these a final draft for circulation and comment.

The job is then advertised.

Stage 2:

(a) The school board receive applications and prepare a shortlist;

(b) Shortlisted candidates attend on one day for separate interviews with each of the following:

(i) teacher representatives;

(ii) parents representatives;

(iii) pupil representatives;

(Each representative group is chosen by its constituent body, but all act in a 'personal capacity' - i.e. no reporting back.

From these interviews emerge three lists giving a choice of 1st, 2nd, 3rd.

The three representative groups meet under the chairmanship (but not the direction) of a school board representative - a final list of first, second, third preference is drawn up in secret session. This list then becomes ADVICE to the school board.

Everyone is told in advance that the final decision rests with the school board.

NB This is experimental and not general practice.

(E) A Catholic VWO/HAVO - 1,6000 pupils in Zeeland

School leader team: Rector and 6 con-rectors.

Con-Rector Selection Appointments

(a) Advice on selection procedures is given by a council of teachers, parents, pupils, school board members, con-rectors.

(b) Selection is left to Rector, con-rectors and teacher representatives.

(F) A Protestant VWO/HAVO - 1,200 pupils in Gelderland

School leader team: Rector plus 4 con-rectors.

Appointment of Con-Rectors

(a) Teaching and non-teaching staff are involved in an informal assessment of the kind of person required.

(b) A 'confidential' committee of teaching and non-teaching staff consider applications and make recommendations;

(c) Pupils are asked their views by class teachers and a 'profile' is put together;

(d) Internal and external applicants are considered. Each one shortlisted is interviewed by the 'confidential' committee, by the rector and con-rectors and by parents' council representatives. (My informant was a successful external applicant!)

(G) A Catholic VWO/HAVO/MAVO - Brabant

Selection and Appointment of Con-Rector

(a) All teachers are informed of the vacancy - personal profile and job description are outlined;

(b) Leadership team (con-rectors) give the rector their view. Outside applicants may be considered.

(H) A Catholic VWO/HAVO - 1,135 pupils in Celderland

The school has a school leader team of rector (Head) plus 5 con-rectors (deputy heads).

Selection and appointment of Con-Rectors

(a) It is usual for appointments to be internal.

(b) The vacancy is discussed with 5 or 6 teacher representatives who are elected every two years by all of the teachers in the school. A broad job description is prepared which leaves room for specialist contribution of applicants.

(c) Teachers present 4 or 5 names to the Rector.

(d) A list of candidates is prepared.

(e) Candidates are interviewed by the Rector and by a staff member.

(f) A recommendation is put to the school board (governors) - one name is usually recommended - two names go forward if the decision is 'difficult' or 'doubtful'.

Selection and Appointment of Rector

(a) Usually an external appointment.

(b) A school committee considers all applications. This committee includes teacher representatives, parent representatives, the con-rectors and members of the school board. A short list is drawn up by the school committee.

(c) Shortlisted candidates are given separate interviews with:

(i) teacher representatives;

(ii) parent representatives/school board representatives/ con-rectors.

IN-SERVICE TRAINING FOR HEADS

Historical Background

Prior to 1976 various agencies provided training for heads. A commercial management course subsidised by the Ministry of Education was considered by many heads to be 'too distant from education management'. Other courses were provided for prospective school leaders by the 'Agogisch Instituut' and 'Berenschot' commercial organisations. These courses were more popular. There were many discussions about the training needs of heads and finally a survey of training needs was undertaken by AVS, the heads' association. This survey revealed the need for urgent action and the Ministry of Education established a steering group charged with the planning of a training course for serving heads. This steering group included teachers' and heads' representatives. The steering group proposals were accepted and the first courses were started in the 1976/77 academic year. There is no doubt that the ready acceptance of the scheme was due to the enthusiasm of the Minister for Education and to the work of the AVS which was the driving force behind the development of in-service education for heads.

The Training Agency

The task of undertaking the training was given to the Gelderse Leergangen, a regional teacher training centre which runs part-time initial teacher qualification courses ("applicatie") and some teacher in-service education. The Gelderse Leergangen has links with the Catholic University of Nijmegen where full-time in. ial teacher

training is provided. It was unusual for a regional institution to be given a national task. This probably stems from the fact that much of the initial discussions and planning of the courses was inspired by Prof. J Giesbers at the Catholic University of Nijmegen. It was perhaps a lucky coincidence that the Minister of Education had been a professor at the same University. Thus the decision was to build on a base of existing experience which was in turn strengthened by the Minister's own knowledge of the providing institution.

The training team at the Gelderse Leergangen is full-time. It had a co-ordinator and 4 full-time members in 1976, but there is now a co-ordinator and 8 full-time members of staff who between them have past experience as deputy head of a large secondary school, head of a pedagogical centre, together with social science qualifications, qualifications and experience in the skills of training adults and commercial management training experience.

The training course at Arnhem - general structure

The course covers a total of 13 days and has 24 participants. It begins with a residential 4-day period in an hotel. During the following 4 months, 3 separate course days are held in regional sub-groups. The whole course then meets together again for a second 4-day residential period. The course is rounded off by 2 more non-residential days for regional sub-groups.

There is no qualification or 'credit' awarded.

The course is open to serving heads and their deputies on a voluntary basis. The Ministry pay all costs. Participants are recommended by their school boards (or by their heads in the case of deputies). There is an insistence that at least two school leaders attend from each school (three in the case of larger schools). The course brings together people from all types of secondary school - general and technical; indeed from Autumn 1980 special school heads will also be able to attend. An attempt is made to form a group for each course which is homogeneous as to size of school. Sub-groups within the course programme are

homogeneous according to region and type of school in order to facilitate home-based projects and follow-up activities. Since 1976/77 a total of 1,770 will have attended these courses which are heavily over-subscribed (one head I met tried for 3 years before he got a place on the course). In 1979/80 a total of 550 heads and deputies enrolled.

The basic emphasis of the course is the 'school as an organisation in a state of change'. The organisation is studied as a social system and alternative organisational models are examined. Much of the work is based on the ideas of Professor / Marx of Leyden University and of Professor Giesbers at Nijmegen University. It is the view of the trainers that most purpose is served by teaching the participants how to solve problems. Before the commencement of the course participants write a short description of their school. The first residential period is then devoted to a study of the functioning of groups (decision-making, communication and leadership) and organisation and analysis. At the end of this first residential period the participants re-write their school descriptions, using the information and methods studied. In the second residential session the solution of problems, planning and strategies for change are studied. The aim here is to provide participants with the opportunity of describing and diagnosing their own situation and of working out solutions to problems in their own schools.

Throughout the two residential weeks the course programme also deals with the problems of stimulating people to 'co-operate in the formulation and realisation of a particular educational policy, the organisational measures to be taken to realise educational goals and the adaption of school policies to future developments'. The course also deals with the functioning of people within the school organisation, ie the functioning of groups, job and individual leadership, decision making in and between groups and resolving conflicts.

Some group sessions during the residential period give the students practical training in social, group and meeting skills. Videotapes and case studies are used. The trainer stays with the same group throughout the course. During the first residential session work within a single group is studied. During the second residential session inter-group co-operation is studied.

In other working groups individual problem solving methods (week 1) and policy making skills (week 2) are studied. During the non-residential day sessions participants work on specific action plans for their own schools.

Further Development of the Training Programme

Since 1976 the emphasis has been entirely on the provision of this basic course, but in 1980/81 the Gelderse Leergangen will reduce numbers on the basic course to around 500 a year in order to give room within the same budget and staffing resources for the provision of follow-up courses. This will make room for 3-4 day courses on 'social skills' for a total of 45 participants. The training team have tried to react to needs in the field and are currently considering other extensions in their work which would expand in the broad area of educational organisation and management, including "a more far-reaching and continuous schooling for principals of schools" (Giesbers). They would like to develop more advanced and refresher courses, advice and guidance on organisational development in the school, training of other groups - school management teams, complete staffs of schools, training in specialisations such as personnel management and the development of a study, documentation and information centre for school organisation and management.

EVALUATION OF THE TRAINING PROGRAMME AT ARNHEM

Evaluation Undertaken by the Training Team

The training team have attempted various evaluations of their work. During the first course year (1976/77) questionnaires were sent out before the course began, asking participants to indicate priorities and problems they would like to have dealt with on the course. This mistakenly suggested that it would be possible to devote the necessary attention to all problems and the practice was discontinued because of unfavourable student reaction.

Since then various techniques have been used to ascertain how participants react to the form, content, manner of presentation of various sections of the programme. Open and closed questions are used. Kees Gielen, the co-ordinator, comments that specific

feedback is useful for course planning but notes that 'over-much evaluation irritates the participants if there is no change'. Conversely, a 'good atmosphere' on a course can lead to absence of any useful criticism!

Participants have been asked for comments at the end of the course and many refer to the help gained at the level of practical 'tips' and information, a realisation that some problems are related to the type of organisation rather than their personal style of leadership, and some contend that they have gained more insight into the complexity of problems and learnt a more flexible approach to matters.

An evaluation study on effects of the training up to 12 months after the course was begun by a researcher at Nijmegen University, but he left for another job and the task was not completed.

The training team have regular talks with national school boards, teachers' organisations and other interested parties in order to discuss their "desires and aspirations" for the course.

The course co-ordinator is very conscious of the limitations imposed by time, and staffing and budget resources. He would like to add a consultant in organisational development to the team, but this is not possible financially. He sees various needs - the urgent need to train local school boards, the desirability of school-based training, the need for follow-up, but has little prospect of meeting these needs immediately. It is recognised by the training team that the programme offers an 'emergency kit' at present, and that the training opportunities need extending. This is difficult, of course, without running into problems of funding.

Evaluation by Teachers' Associations and by Heads and Deputies

The heads and deputies I met who have completed the training, like the course. The main reasons are that it has status and recognition nationally and that it has practical relevance to their work and the problems confronting them in schools. There was some criticism of the costly nature of residential training, but most participants underlined the need to achieve temporary isolation from day-to-day pressures. Residential training had also helped to facilitate group development and cohesion and to cement links with other heads which would continue beyond the training period.

There was some criticism of the course by two teachers' associations because it doesn't deal sufficiently with industrial relations

problems, 'conflict situations' and the need for heads to prepare for democratic participation. Other people see a need for training before appointment as a head or deputy, and suggested solutions including 'training in management as a basis for all secondary teacher training' (a teachers' association) and a 'probationary year for headship' (a local authority education adviser). One of the national pedagogic centres (there is 1 Catholic, 1 Protestant and 1 'neutral') saw a need to accelerate the Arnhem programme to quickly complete basic training for all 3,000 heads of general and technical secondary schools and to look to the national pedagogic centres to develop team training and on-going school-focused training as a development of their work in this field. "People need consultation throughout the whole process of change" (Van Velzen Catholic Pedagogic Centre).

My Observations on the Programme

It is difficult for a foreign observer to group the essential characteristics and problems of another educational system in a period of 3 weeks. Nevertheless I must attempt to draw some tentative conclusions.

The Arnhem course has met an urgent need for training and is a fine example of co-operation between interest groups in a complex educational structure. All have responded positively and quickly to the needs of the school leaders.

There are many problems which the training team are aware of but cannot resolve because of resource difficulties. Trainers are unable to attend all non-residential sessions, and although schools benefit from exchanging information and experiences, they do not necessarily follow through their priority problems but may concentrate on 'safer' and less contentious issues while they have to depend on a 'do-it-yourself'kit without consultant support in the school.

The basic problem is that this course stops at the critical stage where heads are ready to continue development in their own schools of skills gained on the course. Because of staff shortages the Arnhem team are unable to act as consultants for this work.

It takes years to change approaches, learn new skills and follow through changes in schools. This cannot be done as a short course and there is need to provide immediate follow-up through the support

structures and/or by means of a follow-up course for heads and deputies who have attended the basic course. Some schools have done their own follow-up to school-based and school-focused training, but this has depended on individual initiatives by headteachers who have attended the course.

This need for time and on-going support for development work in the schools is perhaps the main drawback of the course. This is not to underestimate its impact, however. The Arnhem courses provide an excellent opportunity for heads, and put the Netherlands in the premier league of European headteacher training initiatives.

LIST OF PEOPLE VISITED

Heads/Deputy Heads

Name	School	Description
Drs F A Valken	Scholengemeenschap Simon Stevin THE HAGUE	Municipal VWO/HAVO/MAVO 1203 pupils: co-ed
Drs J Wagemakers	Macropedius College Scholengemeenschap GEMERT	Roman Catholic Atheneum/HAVO/MAVO 1093 pupils: co-ed
Drs D Kraamwinkel	Spaarne Scholengemeenschap Zwemmerslaan HAARLEM	Municipal Lyceum/HAVO/MAVO 1272 pupils: co-ed
Drs B Elsen	St Ludgercollege DOETINCHEM	Roman Catholic VWO/HAVO 1135 pupils: co-ed
Mr J E Broekhuizen	Rijks Scholengemeenschap LOCHEM	State, Atheneum/HAVO 1035 pupils: co-ed
Mrs Soggies Deputy Head	Christelyk Atheneum ARNHEM	Protestant VWO/HAVO 800 pupils: co-ed

I also met some 30 people on one of the training courses as well as members of the Committee of AVS, the secondary heads' association.

Ministry of Education and Science

Drs J Kastik

Mr J Schelfhout

Mr L P Verhage

Drs Th M E Liket

Drs F de Rijcke

Drs J F G Veldhuis

Mr Voort

Mr van den Burg

Dr J P Naeff (Coordinating school inspector, Arnhem)

Teachers' Associations

Mr E de Jong)
Mr R de Bruin) Protestants - Christelijke Onderwijsvakorganisatie (PCO)

Drs F Roefs Nederlands Genootschap van Leraren (NGL)

Mr J E Broekhuizen, member of the Board of AVS (Algemene Vereniging van Schoolleiders by het VWO en AVO)

Drs B Elsen, general Editor of 'DIRECTORS', the AVS magazine

Local Authority

A Burgers van den Bogaert
Deputy Chief Education Officer
THE HAGUE

Drs R J B Schijff
School Inspector
THE HAGUE

Other Central Government Departments

Drs R van Gendt
Scientific Council for Government Policy

International Agencies based in the Netherlands

Mr P Waddington International Union of Local Authorities
Mr H Allen " " " " "
Mr B F Blackwell Bernard van Leer Foundation
Mr G G Blokland " " " "

Training Agencies

Drs K Giclen:	Head of school leaders courses, Gelderse Leergangen, ARNHEM
Mr Doornbos:	School Guidance Service, Schoolbegelerdingsclienst, ARNHEM
Drs S de Witt:	" " " "
Drs van Velsen:	National Catholic Pedagogical Centre,'s Hertogenbosch
Prof J Giesbers:	Head of Department of Education, Catholic University of NIJMEGEN

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